O 231851Z JUL 03 FM SECSTATE WASHDC TO AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 213164

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAID ECON ETRD SADC

SUBJECT: PULLING THE RCSA PLUG ON SADC

REFS A) GABORONE 1179 B) STATE 175988

- 11. WASHINGTON AGENCIES APPRECIATE POSTS' EFFORTS TO WALK BACK SADC'S DECISION NOT TO ACCEPT USG FUNDS FOR PROJECTS THAT PRECLUDE ZIMBABWEAN PARTICIPATION. WE REGRET THAT SADC COULD NOT ARRIVE AT A TIMELY DECISION THAT WOULD ALLOW USAID'S REGIONAL CENTER FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (RCSA) TO OBLIGATE \$22.5 MILLION IN FY03 THROUGH THE SADC SECRETARIAT.
- 12. DEPARTMENT CONCURS IN EMBASSY GABORONE'S PROPOSAL TO SEND THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO THE SADC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, SIGNED BY THE AMBASSADOR AS THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO SADC.

DEAR DR. RAMSAMY:

AS WE HAVE DISCUSSED ON MANY OCCASIONS, ONE OF THE UNIQUE POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE U.S.-SADC RELATIONSHIP WAS THE PRACTICE BY THE REGIONAL CENTER FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (RCSA) OF OBLIGATING ITS ANNUAL PROGRAM BUDGET OF APPROXIMATELY \$22 MILLION/YEAR THROUGH THE SADC SECRETARIAT.

THIS EXERCISE, UNPRECEDENTED IN OUR RELATIONS WITH OTHER REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN AFRICA, HIGHLIGHTED THE SHARED GOALS OF SADC AND THE USG FOR THE REGION.

WHILE WE HOPED VERY MUCH TO CONTINUE THIS PRACTICE, WE UNDERSTAND THE SECRETARIAT IS UNABLE TO CONFIRM SADC'S WILLINGNESS TO DO SO. BECAUSE OF TIME CONSTRAINTS RELATED TO THE CLOSING OF OUR FISCAL YEAR, WE ARE UNABLE TO WAIT ANY LONGER FOR A SADC DETERMINATION. I AM THEREFORE INFORMING YOU THAT RCSA WILL OBLIGATE ITS FUNDS IN A DIFFERENT MANNER THIS YEAR AND IN THE FUTURE. THIS DECISION MAY ALSO AFFECT OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL AND OTHER SUPPORT TO THE SADC SECRETARIAT.

WE DEEPLY REGRET THAT SADC HAS BEEN UNABLE TO FIND, AS WE HAVE DISCUSSED IN THE PAST, A WAY TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE UNITED STATES IN SPITE OF THE DIFFICULTIES POSED BY THE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE. WHILE THIS HAS CONSTRAINED THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE USG AND SADC, WE HOPE TO CONTINUE OUR POSITIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE SADC SECRETARIAT IN SUPPORT OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICA'S REGIONAL GOALS.

SINCERELY.

JOSEPH HUGGINS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO SADC

POWELL